



## Ready for change: Preparing public health agencies for the impacts of climate change. A climate masters guide for the public health sector

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### Abstract:

In 2008, the University of Oregon's Climate Leadership Initiative and the Oregon Coalition of Local Health Officials surveyed Oregon public health departments on their knowledge of climate change, the impacts on public health, actions being taken to prepare for these impacts, and resource needs to take action. Many respondents expressed an interest in taking action to prepare their departments and communities for climate change, but felt they did not have the knowledge, tools, financial or staffing capacity, or organizational commitment to do so. This manual is a response to those concerns. It provides guidance on how to prioritize and implement the operational changes that allow public agencies to prepare their employees and communities for climate change. Additionally, it provides guidance about how to demonstrate and communicate a commitment to reducing risks and building resilience. The following climate preparedness categories are discussed: Extreme heat, Disease patterns, Water, Food, Air quality, Mental health. Many public health departments are stretched for human and financial resources. This handbook identifies actions that can be implemented immediately and at low cost, as well as those that may need long-term planning and budget allocations. Each health topic is examined to describe how it will be affected by climate change and the populations most vulnerable to the health risks. Recommendations are provided to prepare employees as well as communities for these changes. Methods are included for estimating needed capacity to implement the recommended action and the costs associated with such actions. The operations of many health departments are shaped by program and budgeting decisions made at the state level. When facilities are shared with other agencies, operations are also shaped by the interests of other building tenants. This document therefore identifies actions that can occur internally as well as steps that can be taken for influencing decision-makers at the higher level. Because effective framing and communication with co-workers and constituents is key to incorporating the actions described in this handbook, advice on how to talk about these issues internally and externally is also included. The concluding section provides a number of resources for the public health sector on climate change.

### Source:

[https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1794/10741/PubHealthPrepManual5-10LR\\_0.pdf?sequence=1](https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1794/10741/PubHealthPrepManual5-10LR_0.pdf?sequence=1)

### Resource Description

#### Communication:

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

#### Communication Audience:

audience to whom the resource is directed

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Health Professional, Policymaker, Public

## **Early Warning System:** ▣

resource focus on systems used to warn populations of high temperatures, extreme weather, or other elements of climate change to prevent harm to health

A focus of content

## **Exposure :** ▣

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Air Pollution, Ecosystem Changes, Extreme Weather Event, Food/Water Quality, Food/Water Quality, Food/Water Security, Food/Water Security, Glacier/Snow Melt, Human Conflict/Displacement, Human Conflict/Displacement, Precipitation, Sea Level Rise, Temperature

**Air Pollution:** Allergens, Ozone, Particulate Matter, Other Air Pollution

**Air Pollution (other):** NOx; SO<sub>2</sub>

**Extreme Weather Event:** Drought, Flooding, Hurricanes/Cyclones, Wildfires

**Food/Water Quality:** Chemical, Chemical, Chemical, Other Water Quality Issue

**Water Quality (other):** Water temperature; Ocean acidification; Saltwater intrusion

**Food/Water Security:** Agricultural Productivity, Food Access/Distribution, Nutritional Quality

**Temperature:** Extreme Heat, Fluctuations

## **Geographic Feature:** ▣

resource focuses on specific type of geography

Freshwater, Ocean/Coastal, Rural, Urban, Other Geographical Feature

**Other Geographical Feature :** Floodplains

## **Geographic Location:** ▣

resource focuses on specific location

United States

## **Health Co-Benefit/Co-Harm (Adaption/Mitigation):** ▣

specification of beneficial or harmful impacts to health resulting from efforts to reduce or cope with greenhouse gases

A focus of content

## **Health Impact:** ▣

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Cardiovascular Effect, Infectious Disease, Injury, Mental Health/Stress, Morbidity/Mortality, Neurological Effect, Respiratory Effect, Other Health Impact

**Cardiovascular Effect:** Other Cardiovascular Effect

**Cardiovascular Disease (other):** Heart disease

**Infectious Disease:** Airborne Disease, Foodborne/Waterborne Disease, Vectorborne Disease, Zoonotic Disease

**Airborne Disease:** General Airborne Disease, Influenza

**Foodborne/Waterborne Disease:** Cryptosporidiosis, General Foodborne/Waterborne Disease, Giardiasis, Rotavirus, Salmonellosis, Shigellosis

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**Foodborne/Waterborne Disease (other):** Amoebas; Cyclospora

**Vectorborne Disease:** General Vectorborne, Mosquito-borne Disease, Tick-borne Disease

**Mosquito-borne Disease:** Dengue, General Mosquito-borne Disease, Malaria, West Nile Virus

**Tick-borne Disease:** General Tick-borne Disease, Lyme Disease

**Zoonotic Disease:** General Zoonotic Disease

**Mental Health Effect/Stress:** Mood Disorder, Schizophrenia/Delusional Disorder, Stress Disorder

**Respiratory Effect:** Asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, Upper Respiratory Allergy, Other Respiratory Effect

**Respiratory Condition (other) :** Allergic rhinitis

**Other Health Impact:** Heat stroke

**Medical Community Engagement:** 

resource focus on how the medical community discusses or acts to address health impacts of climate change

A focus of content

**Mitigation/Adaptation:** 

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

**Population of Concern:** A focus of content

**Population of Concern:** 

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Children, Elderly, Low Socioeconomic Status, Racial/Ethnic Subgroup, Workers

**Other Racial/Ethnic Subgroup:** Non-white

**Other Vulnerable Population:** Pre-existing medical conditions; Immunocompromised

**Resource Type:** 

format or standard characteristic of resource

Policy/Opinion, Research Article

**Resilience:** 

capacity of an individual, community, or institution to dynamically and effectively respond or adapt to shifting climate impact circumstances while continuing to function

A focus of content

**Timescale:** 

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

**Vulnerability/Impact Assessment:** 

resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content